

THE WORKFORCE WORD

SPECIAL EDITION:

AWDA Responds to Hurricane Katrina



Since August 30, 2005 at the request of the Red Cross, the City of Atlanta has been pleased to assist those directly affected by Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath by providing the first shelter site and primary service center for Evacuees at Adamsville Recreation Center in Southwest Atlanta. Since, the City of Atlanta and various agencies, including Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (AWDA) have provided evacuees with shelter, clothes, job placement, and multiple other services.



AWDA would like to send a sincere and special Thank-you to everyone, especially volunteers that contributed with Katrina relief assistance.

The Eye of the Storm; A Category 5 Hurricane, Katrina was one of the largest and most destructive storms ever experienced by the United States Gulf Coast.



Red Cross Staff set-up stations throughout the Adamsville Recreation Center to assess the initial needs of Evacuees.

AWDA staff has and will continue to work in conjunction with the City of Atlanta's Adamsville Recreation Center. Initially this relationship was cultivated through the Mayor's Community Cyber Center Program and the Cyber Center Computer Lab located at the Adamsville Recreation Center. Because of this relationship, AWDA became a primary donation source for clothes and other items. Further, AWDA has also added several job fair dates and locations to help evacuees find employment as well as provide appropriate business attire for interviews. AWDA staff and volunteers were on site at the various Evacuee, Salvation Army, and Red Cross Centers to distribute materials and information containing valuable resources to affected Gulf Coast residents, their local families, and all concerned Atlanta citizens.

An Overhead view of the Adamsville Gym, converted into a shelter where many Evacuees gathered and rested.



Displaced New Orleans residents Steven and Vivian Harris visited Adamsville in search of resources to assist in their transition to Atlanta.



AWDA staff Ralph Dickerson & Michelle Hunter assist Evacuees with online searches inside the Adamsville Cyber Center.



(Pictured Left) Evacuees and Displaced residents from Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana gather in the Adamsville cafeteria to hear important announcements regarding local and federal assistance and receive temporary vouchers for gas and local hotels.

Assisting Agencies

- Georgia Department of Labor
- Atlanta Housing Authority
- Atlanta Public Schools
- Atlanta Development Authority



Peggy Crawford holds a sign informing and directing those seeking to bring donations and supplies to AWDA's One-Stop Center. (below)



AWDA has served and assisted more than 2000 Hurricane Evacuees from: Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

More than 400 Volunteers from Atlanta helped our efforts including:

- Democrats
- Republicans
- GA Telco Credit Union
- Delta Airlines
- Four Seasons Hotel
- Art Initiative
- Various Local & Community Churches
- Intown Community Association

Atlanta Housing Authority and **Atlanta Development Authority** strategically positioned Housing Resources at Evacuee locales and AWDA's One-Stop Center. A list of approximately 800 affordable housing units for city residents and Hurricane Katrina individuals and families have been posted and distributed around various city facilities. The housing list is also available on the City of Atlanta website; www.atlantaga.gov

The Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) set-up remote stations with Counselors at various Evacuee Centers and Shelters. DOL also continued their recent activity at Weekly AWDA Job Fairs. **Atlanta Public Schools (APS)** was on-site at various locations including the Adamsville Rec Center and AWDA's One-Stop Center to ensure that displaced families could re-enroll children in school.

Loan Nguen, Michelle Dorsey, JoAnn Paschal, and Anthony Jones lead efforts to collect and sort donations from Public and Private entities. They also organized the teams of volunteers that poured in to give their time, resources, and hard work. Nearly the entire AWDA staff came in to Volunteer over the Labor Day Holiday Weekend.



AWDA's One-Stop Center Cafeteria was transformed into a mini-mall filled with Donations ranging from food and simple Supplies to clothing and toiletries.

AWDA relied on Public & Private Partnerships to support Evacuees and those assisting them in Metro Atlanta.



Robert Gregory helps separate items to be included in care packages.



John Lewis & Energy Fitness, natives of the Adamsville community, unload and move contributions into the recreational center.

City of Atlanta Agencies including Public Works organized relief efforts and helped to transport donations throughout the entire city.

Atlanta Community Food Bank distributed ½ million pounds of food and supported 19 partner agencies that served large families. The food bank also distributed 1,200 book bags with school supplies for students.

Local Faith-based community remained actively involved since initial response labors and raised thousands of dollars to assist various agencies.

Hosea Feed the Hungry helped collect and distribute toiletries, food, clothing, and housing for 312 families.

IKEA donated 1,000 mattresses and bedding in addition to 4,000 stuffed animals.

Macy's contributed clothing and more than 200,000 hangers and racks.

Red Cross worked on-site at strategic shelters to assess primary requirements.

Salvation Army provided shelter, food and other basic necessities.

Wal-Mart bestowed an entire warehouse for temporary storage of collected items.

Television, Print, and Radio Media provided incessant coverage and updates on how and what supplies to contribute.

Employment Services

The City of Atlanta acknowledged early in relief efforts that many of the displaced Gulf Coast residents would be relocating to metropolitan Atlanta permanently. These affected peoples required immediate jobs, and recognizing this overwhelming necessity for employment, AWDA helped to facilitate over 10 job fairs in September.

More than 800 individuals have attended recent Job Fairs and more than 500 people attended the job fair on Saturday, September 17, 2005.

These job fairs provided the opportunity for hundreds to apply and interview with local private and public firms, where many employers were ready to hire for full & part-time employment on-site.

AWDA will continue to provide employment resources, various services, and information to help the Hurricane Katrina evacuees make a transition back into the workforce.



Resume Assistance
Job Training
Phone Access
Career Counseling
Barber Services
Clothes Closet
Complimentary Meals
Food / Care Packages
Childcare
Counseling
Computer / Internet Access
Transportation Shuttles



Mr. Jacob Crawford, a Slidell Louisiana evacuee receives congratulations from First Source Manager, Shirley Harris on landing a job with Atlanta based Turner Professional Services. The commercial and residential concrete finishing company hired Mr. Crawford within days of relocating to Atlanta through AWDA's First Source division that was on location at the Adamsville Recreation Center to provide access to employment opportunities. Mr. Crawford remains one of the many evacuees able to access employment opportunities through AWDA.

Storm Statistics

Beginning September 3rd AWDA coordinated efforts with Adamsville Recreational Center and helped to collect and send 9 initial loads / shipments to the Walmart Center in Douglasville & Atlanta Salvation Army Headquarters. Since then, AWDA sent more than 30 total loads and has averaged at least one major shipment a day.

During the first weekend of responding to Katrina, volunteers at Atlanta Workforce Development Agency (AWDA) sorted over 8,000 pounds of food, 3,000 pounds of clothes and served over 500 families through the general store.

37 families came into AWDA September 20, 2005 and were provided clothing, and approximately 50 people a day picked up donations from AWDA.

Firemen from Gulf States came to AWDA for some R & R while also shopping for supplies and necessities for their displaced families.

With the assistance of groups like All Saints Episcopal, AWDA assembled backpacks with children's clothing, toys, and toiletries and then distributed these according to size, gender, and age.

The warehouse leased on behalf of Walmart stored over 1 ton of clothes, 900 mattresses and 900 sets of bedding.

After many of the donations had been distributed and dispersed to various agencies, families, and individuals, AWDA still had approximately 100,000 pieces of clothing left in the building.



AWDA's Marcus Stanley was on-site at Adamsville to assist in transporting donations.

What Next...

AWDA is no longer accepting donations of clothing items, but because of the high demand, we will continue to receive and distribute

Child supplies including:

Baby Formula
Baby Powder
Diapers
Children's Tylenol
Pull-Ups larger kids

Select Adult items including:

Aspirin
Bath Towels
Conditioner
Deodorant
Ensure
First Aid Supplies
Lotion
Paper Towels
Soap / Shampoo
Razors / Shaving Cream
Toothpaste/Toothbrushes

Composed by: Jae Scarborough
Contributions from Shirley Harris
Edited by Roberta Morris